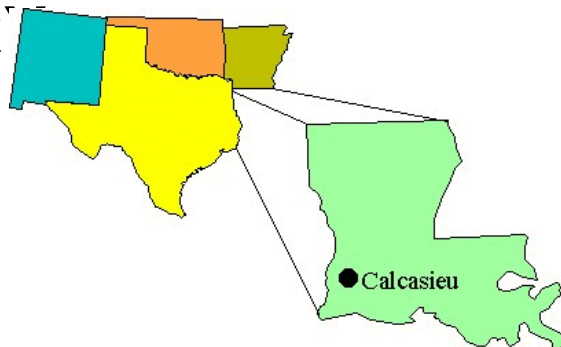


CALCASIEU ESTUARY

(Formerly Bayou d'Inde)



EPA REGION 6

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 7

Calcasieu Parish

Updated: March 27, 2001

Site Description

Location: ! The Calcasieu Estuary includes, but is not limited to, the area of the Calcasieu River from northern Moss Lake up to the salt water barrier in Lake Charles, including Bayou d'Inde, Bayou Verdine, dredged spoil islands, Clooney Island, and Coon Island Loop, and any other area that may be added pursuant to an investigation of the area.

Population: ! 56,120 in Lake Charles, Louisiana.
! 4,988 in Westlake, Louisiana.

Setting: ! The area is southwest of Lake Charles, LA, in Calcasieu Parish.

Wastes and Volumes

Principal Pollutants: PCBs, hexachlorobenzene, hexachlorobutadiene, mercury, zinc, EDC, lead, and copper.

Site Assessment and Ranking

NPL LISTING HISTORY

Site HRS Score: None
Proposed Date: None
(Site has not been proposed)

The Remediation Process

Site History:

! The Calcasieu Estuary area is an industrialized area where several petrochemical and agrochemical plants manufacture and process diverse products such as petroleum, sodium hydroxide, chlorine, teflon, butadiene, synthetic rubber, trichloroethylene, and perchloroethylene.

! The Bayou d'Inde expanded site inspection (ESI) report was completed by EPA on September 28,

1993. The results of the ESI sampling documented an observed release of both organic and inorganic compounds to the surface water.

! EPA, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), National Oceanic Atmospheric Agency (NOAA), US Army Corps of Engineers (COE), and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) met on March 23, 1995, to discuss the Bayou d'Inde area. It was decided that dredging should move forward, but that the dredge spoil should be adequately characterized before disposal.

! EPA staff met with the Bayou d'Inde workgroup in Lake Charles on December 7, 1995, to discuss the final revisions to the sampling and analysis plan. The Calcasieu Parish has plans to dredge the entire bayou in stages in order to get more industries to locate along the bayou.

! NOAA released a report in September 1996 titled, "Contamination Extent Report and Preliminary Injury Evaluation for the Calcasieu Estuary."

! The EPA released a report based on the 1996 Bayou d'Inde sampling titled, "Findings Report for the Focused Site Assessment" on August 21, 1997. The report indicated that there are several contaminants above screening human health and ecological risk assessment benchmarks.

! EPA, LDEQ, NOAA, and USFWS held a roundtable on August 26, 1997. The purpose of the roundtable was to give industry information on current Federal and State activities in the Calcasieu Estuary and to provide basic information on Superfund and Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) programs. In addition, EPA and LDEQ required industries to send a letter committing to conducting an Remedial Investigation (RI) through a cooperative process by October 15, 1997. On October 6, 1997, nine industries submitted a letter to EPA and LDEQ. However, the commitment letter failed to commit to performing three key elements discussed during the roundtable: 1) performing an RI/FS, 2) funding for EPA/State oversight costs, and 3) funding a community involvement.

! EPA submitted a letter to LDEQ and the nine industries indicating that unless a revised commitment letter was received by October 31, 1997, indicating the three key elements at a minimum, EPA will evaluate the site's hazardous ranking for possible listing on the February 1998 NPL. The nine industries sent a letter to EPA on October 31 requesting a meeting on November 7 to discuss the cooperative process.

! EPA, LDEQ, NOAA, and DOI met with nine Industries from the Calcasieu Estuary on November 7, 1997, to discuss a potential cooperative agreement. The industries agreed to revise their commitment letter and send the letter to EPA by November 14, 1997. The letter was to include the following commitments by the industries: 1) Provide oversight costs to EPA, LDEQ, and all Natural Resource Trustees, 2) Provide costs for community outreach, 3) sign a tolling/standstill agreement with NOAA and DOI, and 4) enter into a cooperative process using an EPA enforceable agreement (consent decree or administrative order on consent). The industries asked that a detailed negotiated statement of work be attached to this enforceable agreement. The industries estimated that it might take until May 31, 1998, to negotiate the statement of work and the enforceable agreement. In addition, the industries asked that all Natural Resource Damage Assessment claims and listing on the site be halted during this period of negotiations.

! The EPA, LDEQ, NOAA, DOI, USFWS, LDNR, and Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries met with the Industry Group on December 1, 1998 to discuss a revised statement of work. The Industry Group requested a due date of January 29, 1999 for a revised statement of work and a draft consent decree.

! The Calcasieu Estuary Environmental Action Group (CEEAG) membership began with nine Industries but by the end of January 1999, membership had dwindled to three companies. After receiving CEEAG's last proposal, EPA notified CEEAG on March 9, 1999, that in order to evaluate the Calcasieu Estuary in a timely manner, it was in the best interest of the public to conduct a Government-lead RI/FS.

! EPA issued a Statement of Work to its contractor in June 1999 to conduct a remedial investigation and feasibility study.

Health Considerations: Human ingestion of bioaccumulated contaminants in marine life from fish and shellfish harvesting in the bayou and connected waterways by local and commercial fishermen.

Other Environmental Risks: The Calcasieu River, Lake Charles, and Prien Lake are estuarine in nature and have been designated for the usage of primary and secondary contact recreational use and the propagation of fish and wildlife. There are several delineated wetlands considered sensitive environments along Bayou d'Inde, the PPG Canal, and the Calcasieu River. Recreational fishing occurs in Bayou d'Inde and the PPG Canal as well as recreational and commercial fishing occurs in the Calcasieu Ship Channel, Calcasieu River, and Prien Lake.

Community Involvement

In order to keep the public informed, the EPA plans to publish periodic information bulletins to share information about the Calcasieu with the public. In addition, the EPA expects to hold quarterly meetings in the community to share information, answer questions, and hear from the citizens. All studies will be published on the EPA web site (www.epa.gov/region6/calcasieu) and will be available at the Lake Charles Library repository located at the Calcasieu Parish Central Branch at 301 West Claude Street.

The Calcasieu Estuary Community Outreach Office was opened on November 8, 1999. The office is located at 110 West Prien Lake Road in Lake Charles, Louisiana. (337)562-9801

Office hours:

Tuesday	9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Thursday	3:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Saturday	9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

The EPA will be providing educational documents and video material designed to aid residents and officials in understanding the investigation and assessment process. The additional information will be available in the Community Outreach Office.

Community Involvement Activities

- June 10, 1999 - Open House/Come and Go Session at the Lake Charles Civic Center
- August 30, 1999 - Emergency Response Workshop
- November 8, 1999 - Ribbon Cutting Ceremony/Community Outreach Office
- January 31, 2000 - An informational public meeting was held by EPA to discuss the Sampling and Analysis Plans for the Upper and Lower Calcasieu River.
- June 22, 2000 - EPA held a public workshop to release the data from the Phase I sampling.
- July - August 2000 - EPA held three public workshops to discuss the risk assessment process and how it will be implemented during the estuary study.
- October 25, 2000 - EPA held an information meeting with the community to discuss the kickoff of the Phase II sampling.
- February 2001 - EPA mailed a site update summarizing the Phase II sampling activities.

October 1999 - Information Bulletin

June 99- Information Bulletin

March 99 - Calcasieu Estuary Update

Contacts

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Enforcement

! EPA does not have current or past litigation with regards to the estuary study. EPA may consider the use of litigation at the appropriate points in the Superfund process to ensure that work will be performed and past costs are recovered.

! EPA has notified potentially responsible parties that they may be liable for past costs and may pursue cost reimbursement in the future.

Present Status and Issues

EPA developed a statement of work (SOW) in cooperation with LDEQ, NOAA and USFWS. The statement of work can be accessed through the site web page. The SOW is a required contractual document between EPA and its contractor. The SOW outlines a general scope for the Calcasieu Estuary Sediment studies and specifies what documents are required to be submitted by the EPA contractor.

Sampling plans for Bayou Verdine, Bayou d'Inde and Upper and Lower Calcasieu have been published and are available at <http://www.epa.gov/region6/calcasieu>.

EPA's contractor began collection of environmental data in the estuary on December 6, 1999. Collection of sediment data was completed on March 6, 2000. A database was released on EPA's website in June 2000.

An ecological reconnaissance sampling was conducted from April 24 to May 4, 2000. The sampling evaluated the types of biota available and collection methods. Limited samples were taken for chemical analysis to assist in planning the ecological sampling planned for the Phase II sampling.

In October 2000, EPA's contractor began collection of sediment data to evaluate the toxicity of the chemicals detected in the first sampling. Biota samples were also collected to understand how chemical may be moving for the sediments into the food chain. The data from this investigation is expected to be released in June 2001.

Benefits

! Addressing the Calcasieu Estuary contamination will ensure protection of the health of people who harvest marine life in the area and protection of the sensitive estuarine environments.